

their rushing streams and rivers filled with bass and trout. Then there are the beautiful colors throughout the fall and spring that bedeck our glorious mountains, attracting tourists from across the globe.

West Virginia is a combination of rural farming communities, coal towns, resorts, and growing cities. It is unquestionably a State in which there is a place for everyone. I believe it is this diversity that attracts many to the State and causes numerous children raised in West Virginia to remain and invest in the State as adults.

West Virginians are proud of their State. As we stand at the dawn of the 21st century symbols of West Virginia pride and achievement can be heard, read, seen, and touched throughout the world via locally produced music, literature, works of art, and crafts. West Virginians are also proud of their people. Almost two centuries ago, the State was known as the fighting place of the Hatfields and McCoys. Since that time, West Virginia has been the home of such remarkable people as, educator Booker T. Washington, pilot Charles "Chuck" Yeager, gymnast Mary Lou Retton, authors Pearl S. Buck, John Knowles, and Denise Giardina, singer and song writer Kathy Mattea, artists Barrie Kaufman, and Susan Poffenbarger, former astronaut Jon A. McBride, scholar Henry Louis Gates, countless athletes, and numerous others.

Today we have the opportunity to honor 136 years of statehood. I ask that we celebrate the people of West Virginia, that we honor the courage of their endeavors and achievements. I ask that we take strength from the majesty of the mountains as do the constituents of West Virginia, and finally that we, as members of this distinguished body, remember the broader message of freedom recognized by West Virginia's logo: Montani Semper Liberi, Mountaineers are Always Free. I am proud of this State and its people and am honored to represent them.●

#### TRIBUTE TO SHEILA ZELLERS, BRIAN HARDEN, ERNIE JONES, AND DON GREEN

● Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to four brave individuals who lost their lives last week in a tragic helicopter crash in Breathitt County, Kentucky. Sheila Zellers, Brian Harden, Ernie Jones, and Don Green, were crew members on a helicopter providing emergency medical service to rural Eastern Kentucky. On Monday June 14, 1999, these dedicated care-givers were returning to the University of Kentucky's Chandler Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky, from Breathitt County Airport. Tragically, they did not make it.

Mrs. Sheila Zellers, of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, served as the flight nurse on

the helicopter and had worked with the University of Kentucky's hospital for more than twenty years. She served in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit and emergency room before becoming a flight nurse in 1991. More importantly, she was a loving wife and mother. Our hearts and prayers go out to her husband Jeffrey and their four sons.

Mr. Brian Harden, from Richmond, Kentucky, was the paramedic on Monday's flight crew. While only 33, he had already had a distinguished career providing emergency medical services in Kentucky as a paramedic. Flight paramedics, such as Mr. Harden, are critical in providing emergency care from the time they leave the scene until they reach the hospital. I would like to extend the Senate's deepest sympathies to his wife Patricia, and their two young daughters.

The helicopter's two pilots, Ernie Jones and Don Green, were both well-known among their colleagues as experienced, highly-skilled pilots. Frequently, the pilots who fly these emergency helicopters are called upon to land their helicopters in small parking lots, highways, pastures, and gorges, in order to safely evacuate their patients. Their families and friends will be in our prayers.

It is important that we recognize the impact these individuals and their colleagues have on the citizens of Eastern Kentucky. Like so much of rural America, the residents of Eastern Kentucky lack easy access to the advanced medical resources and trauma centers available in more metropolitan areas. In order to provide this much needed care to Eastern Kentucky, the University of Kentucky Medical Center began helicopter flights to the region in 1987. For 12 years, these emergency medical crews have ferried accident victims, critically ill children, cardiac patients, and infants too ill to travel by ambulance to the UK Medical Center. It is not unusual for these dedicated care-givers to work twelve hour shifts and fly up to seven missions a day, each time making a difference in the lives of their patients. It is with this in mind that we recognize the sacrifices of these dedicated care-givers and note that they will be forever missed by their families, friends, colleagues, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.●

#### FUELS REGULATORY RELIEF ACT

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong support of S. 880, the Fuels Regulatory Relief Act. This bill will provide relief to hundreds of propane suppliers, farmers, and ranchers in my State of South Dakota.

The Fuels Regulatory Relief Act would exempt propane from being included under the Environmental Protection Agency's Risk Management Program, or RMP, rule. The RMP rule

was crafted as a way to increase awareness among state and local governments and the public of hazardous chemicals in communities. The thinking behind this rule was that if chemical companies had to develop and make public information about a worst case scenario in the event of an accidental release, the companies would take steps to lower the possibility of such an accident. Also, the authors of this rule thought local emergency teams would be able to respond more quickly and efficiently to an accident at a hazardous chemical site if the teams knew in advance how much damage to expect.

I do not have any problems with the RMP rule in that respect. I think communities can benefit from knowing the potential for chemical accidents that could happen within their borders. I do, however, have deep concerns about the inclusion of substances that are not toxic but are flammable. The RMP rule was not created to regulate flammable substances, as demonstrated by the EPA's decision not to include gasoline under the rule. Yet propane is included under the rule, and people who have more than 16,000 pounds of propane on their property will have to submit an RMP.

Complying with this rule is a great burden on propane suppliers, farmers, and ranchers, as the cost per site may be as much as several thousand dollars. I have been contacted by a number of propane suppliers in my State who have expressed their frustration with having to submit an RMP, and the American Farm Bureau has voiced its concerns about the effects of this rule on farmers who use propane for fuel purposes. Small business owners, farmers, and ranchers who possess and use large amounts of propane should not be forced to comply with a rule directed at curbing accidents involving hazardous chemicals, especially when flammable substances are subject to a number of other federal regulations.

For these reasons, I am proud to be a cosponsor of S. 880, the Fuels Regulatory Relief Act. I believe that exempting propane from inclusion under the RMP rule is consistent with the purpose of the rule, as it does not change the way hazardous and toxic chemicals are regulated. The Fuels Regulatory Relief Act will save propane users and suppliers in my State thousands of dollars in compliance costs, and I urge my colleagues to support its expeditious passage.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JOYCE TUGEL

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Joyce Tugel for her outstanding work as a teacher at Marshwood High School. Joyce is one of 208 teachers nationwide to receive the "Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching."